Another *Collier's* Phoney: Russian Planes Over Canada

I. F. Stone's Weekly

VOL. I, NUMBER 36 OCTOBER 10, 1953 WASHINGTON, D. C. 15 CENTS

The Fallacies and Flim-Flam of Non-Aggression

Churchill did not speak of a non-aggression pact in his speech of May 11. He suggested that "the master thought which animated Locarno" might be applied to the relations between Russia and Germany. Locarno was more than a paper promise not to attack. In the 1925 Locarno pact, the British promised "that if Germany attacked France we should stand with the French, and if France attacked Germany we should stand with the Germans."

This implies a new system of mutual guaranties in which the West would obligate itself to aid Germany if she were attacked by Russia and to aid Russia if attacked by Germany. This in turn would entail a Russian obligation to aid Britain and France if the Germans attacked westward. Presumably Adlai Stevenson had a similar idea in mind when on returning from abroad (and a long talk with Churchill) he proposed in his Chicago speech that we "think afresh . . . in terms of a European system of durable assurances of non-aggression—of non-aggression for Russia as well as for France, Germany and the rest of us."

It indicates just how stale the atmosphere has grown that this idea should suddenly seem gratefully fresh and creative, though it was the common currency of diplomatic exchange after World War I and was so disenchantingly devalued by the rise of Hitler before World War II. The system broke down as soon as Germany was ready to try again. The assurances served to lull the predestined victims into a false sense of security; behind the formal facade of shifting agreements from Locarno to the Nazi-Soviet pact, Russia and the West tried to trick each other and ended by tricking themselves.

These longer perspectives are, of course, not quite fair. It is as if one told a man recovering from a heart attack that he might die some day from kidney trouble. Postponement is itself a virtue. The Churchill and Stevenson speeches made the concept of negotiation respectable again. They had the merit of restoring discussion of Russian relations from the bogeyman world of total diplomacy to the discourse of reality, in which it was recognized that Russians, too, were human, with fears as real as our own.

It should not go unobserved that this recognition came at a time when the rapid revival of German power was beginning to alarm Western Europe, when the American alliance was entering on the phase of diminishing returns and when Korea had demonstrated that the military power of the Soviet bloc was too great to risk a World War.

But this promising approach, which Stevenson seems in some sense to have "sold" the rather vague Eisenhower, has degenerated in the hands of Dulles into a swindle. To see the swindle clearly one must go back to the selling point used by Stevenson. The glittering premium with which he sought to make the sale attractive was that if assurances against aggression were rejected by the Soviets, this would "clear the air", i.e. solidify the Western alliance and speed up agreement on EDC. Unfortunately, as often happens with clever salesmen, the prospect has taken the free premium and left the article it was supposed to sell.

For the "non-aggression" pact offered by Dulles in his press conference last Tuesday and more transparently displayed in all its childish deviltry by Ray Cromley's story in the *Wall Street Journal* next day is not what Churchill and Stevenson have been talking about. Dulles merely proposes to offer the Russians the same old package—a rearmed and united Germany in the Western alliance—but now tied up with a pink ribbon. Moscow is to acquiesce in the rearmament of the German monster in return for a vague promise that the monster will not attack. Dulles—one of the humorists of our time—also offers a demilitarized strip along the borders as additional security! It would be amusing to figure how many seconds of additional warning a 100-mile strip provides in the age of supersonic planes.

Dulles is no well meaning babe in the woods. He defended the Locarno pact in an *Atlantic Monthly* article in 1935 not because it offered some assurance to France against German aggression but because it left the door open in the East to German expansion at the expense of Poland. He hoped for an Axis victory before and works for the revival of a new Axis now. He is prepared to offer any paper promise if it will make our allies think he is ready to negotiate in good faith. But all Dulles offers is another poorly sugar-coated version of the unconditional surrender to American terms at which Truman and Acheson pegged the price of peace. It is still "take it or leave it", though this time we offer a vague pledge of non-aggression to go with it. What would we think such a pledge worth if offered by a Russia with bomber bases in the Western hemisphere as part of a deal in which we acquiesced in the rearmament of a warlike neighbor with the scars of invasion still visible on our soil?

The Russians rejected this long ago, even with Locarno style guarantees. When *Pravda* last May 24 published the official reply to the Churchill speech, it welcomed his initiative but rejected his German solution. "Historical experience shows," the Russians said, "that as long as militarist and revanchist elements are given freedom of action in Germany, as long as no effective measures are taken to secure the development of Germany on peace-loving foundations, German militarism returns fairly quickly, and no formal guarantees or obligations can give confidence to Germany's neighbors. . ." If we were not blinded by ceaselessly inculcated hatred, we would see how true this is.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Air Force and the Alaska Office Both Deny It

Another *Collier's* Phoney—Russian Planes Over Canada

Washington

Last Friday *Collier's* took full page ads in many of the country's newspapers for a sensational announcement, "Russian Planes Are Raiding Canadian Skies." This was ballyhooed as a Collier's "eye-witness report". "Almost daily," the ad said, "at least one Red reconnaissance plane violates our continental borders." It reported, "Many have penetrated deep into north central Canada." It warned, "Now that Russia has the H-bomb, we're wide open to a knockout punch."

"What's being done about it?" *Collier's* asked dramatically. "To find out, a *Collier's* correspondent flew thousands of miles, visited top secret installations, saw the Red intruders himself."

All He Saw Was A "Distant Gleam"

This turned out to be a bit of an overstatement. The doughty correspondent, William A. Ulman, told how he was playing poker in an Alaskan radar station when it "picked up the blip of an unidentified plane on its radarscope—almost certainly a Russian." An interceptor plane set off in pursuit, with the *Collier's* correspondent on board. "Minutes later," he reported, "we spotted the distant gleam of a Russian reconnaissance plane, speeding back to its Siberian base." That distant gleam on that one occasion was all Ulman claims to have seen.

According to the ad, "many" of these planes have "penetrated deep into North Central Canada." But the "distant gleam" was a long way from Canada. Ulman says he was in a radar station with the waters of Bering Strait "shining dully in the distance" when pursuit of that gleam began. Bering Strait is 2,000 miles from North Central Canada.

The article itself, when read carefully, turns out to contain only one sentence which supports the sensational, "Russian Planes Are Raiding Canadian Skies." An unnamed "General in the Alaskan Air Command" is quoted as saying, "Some have even penetrated deep into north central Canada." The ad converted the "some" into "many" and made it appear that Ulman had himself seen the "Red intruders."

What The Air Force Said

We asked Air Force HQ at the Pentagon whether the article had been cleared for security. The first answer was that it had been submitted, but "we couldn't go along with a lot of the stuff in it." A security officer would say only that the article had been returned to *Collier's* carrying a disclaimer stamp, which said:

"This article has been reviewed for military security by the Office of Public Information, Department of Defense. When publishing this article, no statement should accompany it indicating such review unless the following statement is included therein: 'Review of this article by the Department of Defense does not constitute verification of factual accuracy or opinion.'"

Collier's, of course, made no reference to this disclaimer, but left it to the reader to assume that the article had been "cleared."

The *Collier's* article said, "Almost every day, at least one unidentified airplane, violates our continental borders." An Air Force officer said this did not agree with Air Force information. He said there were such reports "occasionally" but they were reports of unidentified "blips" on radar screens or of vapor trails.

"We have no knowledge here," the Air Force officer said, "that Russian aircraft have actually been seen by us over Alaska; we cannot speak for Canada. There have been vapor trails and blips on radarscopes which have not been intercepted. If people want to assume that these were Russian planes, that's up to them."

The Air Force officer added, "had there been any violations we could prove, you may be sure you would have heard of it. The State Department would have made a formal protest."

The *Collier's* story brought a similar reaction from J. T. Flakne, chief of the Alaskan Division at the Department of the Interior. Flakne said he had lived in Alaska since 1929 and been chief of the Alaskan division for more than eight years. Flakne said he had heard no reports whatsoever of border violations by Russian planes.

The Ulman article says the range of our radar is 80 to 100 miles. He does not mention that Bering Strait at its narrowest point is only 65 miles across. Thus some "blips" observed in that area may be in Siberia. Nor does he mention that radar "blips" are not easily identifiable.

A recent work on "flying saucers" says there are several hundred different things, including atmospheric phenomena, which can cause "blips" on a radar screen. It is difficult enough to identify one of these as a plane, much less as "Russian" and as a "reconnaissance" plane.

At Air Force HQ, it was explained that a radar operator identifies a "blip" as a plane by getting in touch with the pilot by radio telephone and instructing him to make a sharp turn at a certain angle. If the "blip" moves in that way, the radar operator knows it must be that plane.

A "Plug" For Western Electric?

The *Collier's* story seems to have been a "plug" for a "Distant Early Warning Line" project being developed experimentally by Western Electric. At Air Force HQ it was pointed out that the article's appearance was synchronized with a three-page press release from Western Electric.

The article pictured Russian planes pouring through Canada and said if they could "claw their way through to our East Coast" and drop "only nine hydrogen bombs in a line from Boston to Washington, they could blast out of existence a strip 50 miles wide and 450 miles long" containing "one fourth the nation's population and one-third of its wealth." In one fell blow, they "could kill as many as 35,000,000 Americans and destroy the U.S. as a world power."

However, like the wallflower in the halitosis ads, there is some hope for us yet. Letting Western Electric put a "Distant Early Warning Line" straight across northern Canada from Alaska to Greenland would give us six hours warning, allowing all the Strategic Air Command planes to disperse and launch a retaliatory attack. We could destroy "as many as 90 percent of attacking enemy bombers before they could reach their targets—compared with the 30 percent figure cited in 1950 by General Hoyt S. Vandenberg."

The cost? Only $1,325,000,000 "insignificant when matched against the total defense budget." And what if ten percent of the bombers still get through with those nine bombs? "One of the greatest brains in Arctic radio communications" told the *Collier's* reporter, "Well, what more do you expect to buy in a world like this? We'll warn you—but we can't guarantee you security, too!"

Our Most Lethal Publication

Collier's is rapidly becoming our most lethal publication. Two years ago it gained international notoriety with a bedtime story preview of World War III showing how we could destroy Russia with one big punch. This new sensation shows how Russia could destroy us with one big punch—unless we buy the Western Electric's new warning system. We may, of course, be blown to bits anyway, but in that case why mind the expenditure of another billion? We can't take it with us.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I. F. Stone's Weekly

• *Editor and Publisher*, I. F. STONE

Published weekly except the last two weeks of August at Room 205, 301 E. Capitol St., S.E., Washington 3, D. C. Subscription rates: Domestic, $5 a year; Canada, Mexico and elsewhere in the Western Hemisphere, $6; England and Continental Europe, $10 by 1st class mail, $15 by air; for Israel, Asia, Australia and Africa, $10 by first class mail, $20 by air mail. Single copy, 15 cents. Tel.: LI 4-7087. Entered as Second Class mail matter, Post Office, Washington, D. C.

October 10, 1953 Vol. I, No. 36

As Seen From the Capitol Dome

A recess appointment for a Chief Justice has its risks. One of the hazards under which the new Chief Justice must operate is that certain contentious issues on which he may pass before Congress reconvenes, notably the school segregation case, might affect the vote on his confirmation . . . The aviation lobby is making a strong drive for another Air Policy Commission which it hopes to use (like the last one) as sounding board for higher Air Force appropriations . . . The only visible opposition to the Spanish accord lies in economy-minded Southern Democratic Senators sensitive to the restrictions placed by the Franco regime on Protestant worship. Though the official announcements figure aid to Franco at $367,000,000, a logistics expert of NATO privately estimates the cost at $2,500,000,000. It is this figure which has aroused Senator Russell . . . Now that Mossadegh has been removed, the Iranian problem as seen from the always oil-minded State Department is not so much how to start Iranian oil flowing again as how to keep it from undermining inflated petroleum prices in an oversupplied world market . . . The Church-State quarrel in Poland is not quite as simple as it appears to be in the American press. In Poland, as in Ireland and French Canada, Roman Catholicism has been closely linked with national survival. But the Pope's persistent refusal to establish permanent Polish dioceses in the Oder-Neisse territories has put the Vatican on the German side in a fundamental national issue.

Lee J. Cobb in Death of A Citizen

Scene: 4:30 p.m., June 2, 1953, in room 1117, Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, Hollywood, California. Characters: Lee J. Cobb, star of "Death of a Salesman", and William A. Wheeler, an investigator for the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Occasion: An executive session to determine Cobb's "loyalty," as made public last week.

MR. WHEELER. Do you believe that the United States Government and committees of Congress have the right—I am not (sic) speaking of the rights as set up by the laws of the United States, but the right to investigate Communists within any environment in the United States?

MR. COBB. Yes, sir; I do. * * *

MR. WHEELER. Do you believe that the Committee on Un-American Activities so-called set up a censorship of scripts in the motion picture industry or of the products to be released by the motion picture industry?

MR. COBB. No, sir; I have seen no instance of it.

Having thus been encouraged to air his opinions freely, as befits the free citizen of a free country, Mr. Cobb was given a passing grade.

Scholarly Moment Before The Jenner Committee

Writers on Marxism are advised not to quote Marx, Engels and Lenin too often. Palmer Weber many years ago had the temerity to pick "Three Uses of the Concept of Matter in Dialectical Materialism" as the subject of his master's thesis in philosophy at the University of Virginia. Part 4 of the Jenner Committee hearings on "Interlocking Subversion in Government Departments" released this week shows how this particular wild oat caught up with him.

When Weber was before the committee, Senator Welker wanted to know why "starting on page 121 of your thesis, you used Engels 40 times and Lenin 40 times and Karl Marx 12 times."

This led to a learned exchange with the Senator. Weber tried to explain that up to page 121 he had been dealing with earlier concepts of matter, while from that point on he was discussing Marxist concepts and had to document his sources. "That is very true," Senator Welker conceded, "which leads me to this question—99 of your references were Communist. Now at the time you wrote that thesis were you a member of the Communist Party?" Weber took refuge in the Fifth Amendment. It is a pity the witness was unable to reply that he was only studying Marxism as a form of penance while preparing for holy orders on a grant from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Our New Press Time

The *Weekly* is now going to press on Thursday and being mailed on Friday. It was formerly sent to press on Tuesday and mailed on Wednesday.

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233) SHOWING THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION OF

I. F. STONE'S WEEKLY published Weekly at Washington, D. C. 1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Editor, Managing Editor, Business Manager, I. F. Stone, 5618 Nebraska Avenue, Washington, D. C. 2. The owner is: I. F. Stone's Weekly, Inc., 301 E. Capitol Street, Washington, D. C., I. F. Stone, Esther M. Stone, Celia M. Stone, Jeremy J. Stone, C. David Stone, 5618 Nebraska Ave., Washington, D. C. 3. The known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None. 4. Paragraphs 2 and 3 include, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting; also the statements in the two paragraphs show the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner. 5. The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the 12 months preceding the date shown was 8,204. (s) I. F. Stone, publisher. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 5th day of October, 1953. (s) Elizabeth S. Gladman. [Seal] (My commission expires 10/1/58).

OUR ZERO HOUR APPROACHES

Last Fall, after the New York Daily Compass closed down, the task of keeping alive a vestige of militant libertarian journalism in the age of McCarthy and McCarran looked hopeless. But thanks to your help we have discomfited our enemies and surprised our friends: the Weekly succeeded. Now comes our zero hour. What breaks most publishing ventures of this kind financially is the expense of obtaining renewals as the first year ends. Every mail solicitation costs several hundred dollars. The rate of renewals—and the number of solicitations necessary to get them—will determine when we can begin to expand in size as we hope to do. Some renewals have already begun to come in, and we thank the thoughtful friends who sent them. You can save us a lot of expense and headache by sending in your renewal now. The price is still $5, but you can get a two-year renewal for $9. Or you can renew and send a subscription to a friend as a Xmas gift for the combination price of $9. please renew today. And don't forget that friend. Just fill out the blank on the reverse side of this page.

With many thanks, I. F. STONE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JENNINGS PERRY'S PAGE

The GOP Dilemma: On the Horns of the Farmer's Cow

I have just done a three day's drive through eight states, from Connecticut to Mississippi, on the traces of, literally in the dust of, a subcommittee of the House Agriculture Committee preparing a report on farm conditions and *opinion* this year of the Republican Restoration. Though I never quite came up with the group, a trustworthy newspaperman who travelled with it tells me "The Republicans were so blue the Democrats actually hadn't the heart to rib them about it."

What the roving legislators are seeing and hearing anyone can see and hear in the countryside this fall: the barren pastures, the empty mows, the slattern, half-hungry cattle, the repentant muttering of rural patriots who only a year ago voted for Ike, Dick and Prosperity, who now bite down on the name Benson as on grit in their teeth.

Evidently it is not a happy countryside, and just as evidently it is not the administration in Washington which is responsible for the second drouthy year hand-running. But it is a waste of breath, as the committeemen have found out, trying to explain to the farmer either the facts of Nature or the long range wisdom of Republican policies based on the doctrinaire assumption that the farmer is a typically rugged individual resentful, as a matter of independence, of governmental "interference."

With his own logic, bred of experience, the farmer always has known that any administration is to be held accountable for its weather; that its weather is a sort of judgment upon it by a higher authority than Man. Of more recent experience he has been confirmed also in the belief that his own well-being, as the "cornerstone" of the national well-being, is and should be of prime concern to society. True, he has no liking for the term "relief" and spurns the use of it in connection with his own problems. He has learned however to mistrust those who trade upon his dignity, and his self-esteem nowadays requires rather a prompt public attention to the evils that befall him than a buttery compliment to his "traditional self-reliance."

That is why, looking from his lean cattle and exhausted pasture lands to the winter just ahead, he greets so sourly the assurances of Secretary Humphrey that in these past few Republican months "the cost of living in this country has been stabilized" and the protestations of Agriculture Secretary Benson that the livestock "mess" is the result of "loose and unsound" policies of the preceding Democratic administration. His own costs indeed have been stabilized, at a very high level, while the price of his produce has plummeted. And whether or not the past price of beef is to blame for the number of practically unsalable beeves in his barnlot the farmer cannot help feeling that this explanation of his grief comes with particularly poor grace from a spokesman of the party which for the past twenty years has preached "production, production and more production"—instead of "controls"—as the one means to a healthy economy.

Suppose the Amercan people are ready with their knives and forks to "eat us out of the beef problem." The farmer finds the waiting long and the punishment singular. He sees no other commodity, which he himself must buy to stay in business and to stay alive, whose price has been forced down by "oversupply." It does nothing either for his ego or his sense of fairness to gather that inflation is being licked by depressing the price of beef—alone.

He feels left out and in a measure betrayed. In many instances he has "gone into cattle" not so much for gold as to serve the ends of "conservation," universally urged upon him and reasonable to his own mind, turning from row crop cultivation to upbuilding the soil. His reward is to be left holding the bag.

It hardly is petty of the farmer in this pass to react politically; in any case it is inevitable that he should recall vividly what so recently was dinned into him: that it is time for a change.

The drouth, by doubling the farmer's hurt, has merely doubled the Republican jeopardy in the countryside. This year, the farmer can afford to keep his cow even less than he can afford to let it go to market.

PLEASE RENEW NOW

I. F. Stone's Weekly, 301 E. Capitol, Wash. 3, D. C.

Please renew (or enter) my sub for the enclosed $5:

Name .....

Street .....

City ..... Zone ..... State .....

Enter this gift sub for $4 more (money enclosed):

(To) Name .....

Street .....

City ..... Zone ..... State .....

10-10-53

I. F. Stone's Weekly
Room 205
301 E. Capitol St., S.E.
Washington 3, D. C.

NEWSPAPER

Entered as
Second Class Mail
Matter
Washington, D. C.
Post Office

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED